

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5339

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, WB, GE

SUBJECT: INITIALING OF INNER-GERMAN POSTAL AGREEMENT

1. THE FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATION (BRAUETIGAM) HAS INFORMED US THAT AFTER THREE YEARS OF NEGOTIATION THE INNER-GERMAN POSTAL AGREEMENT WILL BE INITIALED IN EAST BERLIN ON FEBRUARY 27 BY STATE SECRETARIES ELIAS OF THE FRG AND CALOV OF THE GDR. THE TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT HAS ALREADY BEEN PRINTED AND WILL BE MADE PUBLIC TODAY. SIGNATURE OF THE AGREEMENT IS EXPECTED TO OCCUR IN BONN LATE IN MARCH BY ITS NEGOTIATORS.

2. BRAUETIGAM DESCRIBED THIS AGREEMENT AS A TECHNICAL DOCUMENT THAT RATIFIES EXISTING PRACTICES IN AN AREA WHERE THERE HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY FEW DIFFICULTIES. THE FRG VIEW HAS BEEN THAT THESE PRACTICES SHOULD BE CODIFIED AS AGREED AT THE TIME OF THE BASIC TREATY IN ORDER TO ENSURE CONTINUED SMOOTH HANDLING OF COMMUNICATIONS. BRAUETIGAM SAID THAT DESPITE GREAT
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DIFFICULTIES DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS THE FRG IS

SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME. THE AGREEMENT WILL BE IN EFFECT FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME AND IT CONTAINS A BERLIN CLAUSE. A PROVISION OF SPECIAL CONCERN TO THE FRG ALLOWS A WEIGHT LIMIT OF 20 KILOS IN PARCEL POST EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE FRG AND GDR. THIS IS AN UNUSUALLY HIGH FIGURE OF BENEFIT TO WEST GERMANS. BRAUETIGAM THEN CITED CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE AGREEMENT THAT HAVE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE AS REPORTED BELOW.

3. ARTICLE 3 PARAGRAPH 3 PROVIDES THAT BOTH SIDES ARE COMPETENT TO FIX FEES FOR MAIL. AN UNDERSTANDING HAS BEEN REACHED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE IN THE PRESENT PRACTICE WHICH IS TO APPLY INTERNAL POSTAL FEES TO POSTAL TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE FRG AND GDR.

4. ARTICLE 4 PARAGRAPH 2 PROVIDES THAT NO CUSTOMS DECLARATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE MADE BY EITHER PARTY.

5. ARTICLES 8 AND 9 SPECIFY THAT TRANSIT TRAFFIC TO THIRD STATES DOES NOT INCLUDE TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE FRG AND WEST BERLIN. THERE IS THEREFORE NO QUESTION OF FEES OR GDR CONTROLS ON SUCH MAIL WHICH, IN FACT, TRANSITS THE GDR BY RAIL OR TRUCK IN SEALED CONTAINERS. BRAUETIGAM POINTED OUT THAT THIS PROVISION IS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT AS IT APPLIES TO RAIL AND ROAD TRAFFIC TO BERLIN.

6. ARTICLE 13 PARAGRAPH 1 PROVIDES FOR LUMP SUM PAYMENTS OF FEES BASED ON RAIL USE RATHER THAN UPON THE VOLUME OF MAIL. THE GDR NEGOTIATORS DID NOT DISPUTE THIS PRINCIPLE BUT SOUGHT INSTEAD TO OBTAIN A HIGH FIGURE BY WAY OF LUMP SUM PAYMENT.

7. BRAUETIGAM CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY IMPORTANT NEW INNER-GERMAN AGREEMENTS TO BE READY FOR SIGNATURE BEFORE THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS THIS FALL. COOPER

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